NEWSLETTER

ARBORETA & BOTANIC GARDENS

prepared by the public services division

April 10, 1975

DESCANSO DIVISION

The annual Camellia Show was a tremendous success. One hundred and fifteen exhibitors came from all over the state. Over 5,000 flowers were put on display for the visitors to view. There were 21,000 people in attendance which was an all-time record for a camellia show at Descanso Gardens.

The Daffodil Show was just about washed out. Unfortunately, it rained both days of the show, yet 2,100 hearty souls came to see it. With the outstanding work by horticulturists in the last ten years, it is unbelievable what can be seen among daffodils as the result of plant breeding.

The Los Angeles Men's Garden Club had its monthly luncheon in the Hospitality House on March 13.

The Rose Society is having a two-day seminar in Southern California in April that will include a luncheon at Descanso and a tour by George Lewis of the Rose Garden. The Old-fashioned Roses will be the high point of interest because here are found both the ancestors of the Modern Hybrid Teas and the Hybrid Perpetuals. The members will be coming at an opportune time to see the changes taking place in the Rose Garden, such as replanting and placing the chronological procession.

The construction of two new patios is well under way and will soon be completed. These two patios will be an integral part of the night-lighting show that will be a permanent exhibit at Descanso.

The Glendale Art Association will be showing their paintings during the entire month of April.

Descanso was never more beautiful with the camellias still in bloom along with thousands of bedding plants, such as calendulas, iceland poppies, primulas, tulips, and daffodils.

SOUTH COAST DIVISION

Water was turned on the 5th of March to fill our lake. The same afternoon it began to rain, and with this assist from Mother Nature, within the week it was full. Plans call for restocking the lake with Mojave Chubb, an endangered species. Other flora and fauna will soon develop and it will once again become a "living" body of water. The lake provides four types of aquatic habitat: the shallow mudflat area, the cattail marsh, and the lake and stream which are physically connected and mutually attractive to different types of birds and animals one would expect to find in wetland environments. The shallow mudflat area will attract sandpipers and other probers. The marsh is a place for frogs and redwing blackbirds. The lake naturally will attract ducks, and kingfishers will dive from the island. The running water of the stream always attracts many birds to bathe and drink as well as feed. So the lake certainly enriches our natural environment.

Our permanent buildings have at last been approved. Bids were let and a contract was awarded to the August Company on March 11, so construction should start very soon. The received plans call for a combination auditorium-classroom building. Another building will house administrative offices, library and foundation office. We will have a new address as well, 26300 Cren-

shaw Blvd. So after 10 years of having to use the back door we will finally have a "front" through which to enter.

Along with a few days of rain, spring is progressing normally. Over 160 trees were given to local schools for Arbor Day. There was good attendance at our first Sunday garden walk and lecture. Our masses of groundcovers are blooming profusely, although the flowering fruit trees are past their peak. Several unusual birds were sighted in March including a rare eastern visitor, a swamp sparrow. A green-tailed towhee, normally found at high elevations, is spending the winter here. We had a brief visit from a bird not seen in many years, the roadrunner. A bird of open spaces, it was seen here when the garden was much younger, but hasn't been reported for over 5 years.

RESEARCH DIVISION

Ken Montgomery and Lee Enari are currently assisting the L.A. County Regional Planning Commission in implementing plans for the proposed Mulholland Scenic Corridor. The corridor, which will extend along Mulholland Drive and Mulholland Highway for approximately 50 miles from the Hollywood Freeway on the east to the Pacific Coast Highway on the west, represents a unique open-space area at close hand to the citizens of Los Angeles. The scenic and recreational potential of the area is enormous. The technical information and recommendations that we are providing concern the native plants and ecology of the area, importance of the roots of chaparral shrubs in soil erosion control, measures to take to protect the natural vegetation, and plants to use for landscaping within the corridor. The first part of the work has been completed. Two other parts are due later this month.

PUBLIC SERVICES DIVISION

We wish to welcome our new permanent tour guide, Marianne Sioles, who is replacing Ray Robinson. Marianne attended El Camino College in Torrance and holds a B.A. in biology from Cal State Northridge. Marianne, who lives with her husband in Woodland Hills, is a house plant enthusiast, a biological illustrator who does pen and ink drawings for biology work, and is a certified scuba diver.

In spite of miserable, cold, rainy weather the 5th annual Baldwin Bonanza was a great success. Including the preview on Saturday night 13,036 people attended (only about 800 less than last year).